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THE SPEAKERSHIP CONTEST.

CRISP'S ELECTION NOT AN ALLIANCE VICTORY.

A Contest for Spoils Brings no Trophies to the Cause of Reform—“No Man can Serve Two Masters”—“Keep in the Middle of the Road.”

From the National Reformer.

No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

We quote the above text in connection with the action taken by a number of Alliancemen who owe their position, as Congressmen, to Alliance votes. Their attitude in the recent contest in the Democratic caucus for the selection of a speaker for the House of Representatives is not only to be deplored but is positively reprehensible. Those men were chosen, in preference to “straight” Democrats, because they were supposed to represent Alliance principles and would subordinate their party allegiance, if necessary, for the purpose of carrying these principles into effect. On the 6th day of December, 1889, the National Alliance entered into a compact with the Knights of Labor, agreeing upon the principles embodied in what is known as “the St. Louis Demands.” More than this, they agreed upon a line of action. They then declared:

And it is further agreed, in order to carry out these objects, we will support for office only such men as can be depended upon to enact these principles in statute law uninfluenced by party caucus (Page 51, Proceedings of the Annual Session F. & L. U., 1889.)

We have italicized these words in the above extract because we desire to call attention to the fact that the ultimate and paramount object of the Alliance is to accomplish what it set out to do, and not to give prominence to any man, or set of men, or to build up and foster any enterprise instituted in its name.

This clause was omitted at the Ocala meeting, for some reason, and so far as the records show, the Alliance is bound by that agreement with the Knights of Labor. It has never been abrogated. The agreement could only be changed by the concurrence of both parties, and the records show no such concurrence. On the other hand it would seem that there was no intention, either on the part of either the committee or the delegates, to omit the clause referred to. Be that as it may, if it was intentional it indicates insincerity; if not, it is yet as binding as ever.

In this connection a part of the proceedings of the Ocala meeting will be of interest.

Mr. L. F. Livingston, of Georgia, of-

fered a resolution endorsing the St. Louis platform, saying:

“I believe the people can stand on this platform forever. This platform is a declaration of our Supreme Council, and our enemies are stumping the states declaring that it has not the following of the Alliance people, and I desire the platform read and a vote taken on it by states, so there will be no mistake as to how we stand.” The resolutions offered by Mr. Livingston were as follows:

1. Resolved, That this national convention of the Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union do hereby most earnestly and emphatically endorse the St. Louis platform adopted last December, and with equal sincerity and persistency demand that all subordinate bodies connected with this organization shall not only align themselves therewith, but co-operate with this national organization and sustain the same.

Every state except one voted for this resolution.

The next resolution was:

2. That any national officer or organ, either state or national, that shall not conform fully with the foregoing resolution shall be subject to suspension by the national president; and furthermore we advise our people not to vote for any candidate for a place in our national Congress who does not pledge himself or themselves to the St. Louis platform. (Italics ours.)—(Page 22, Proceedings of Ocala meeting.)

Now Mr. Livingston, or any other man, after offering that resolution and insisting on its adoption, could vote for Mr. Crisp for speaker, may be as difficult to explain as for John Sherman to harmonize his present position on the finance questions with his declarations in 1868. Mr. Crisp makes no pretensions to stand on the St. Louis platform. Are we to understand that Mr. Livingston and those Alliancemen who voted for Mr. Crisp, have prescribed a medicine that they won't take themselves? If this medicine is good for the voters to take when deciding between Mr. Livingston and his opponent, is it not equally potent for Mr. Livingston to take when deciding between a man who does not endorse the St. Louis platform and one who does?

But Mr. Livingston's second resolution makes it obligatory on “any national officer or organ, either state or national, to conform fully” with the St. Louis agreement on penalty of suspension by the national president. What is that agreement? That “we will support for office only such men as can be depended upon to enact these principles in statute law, uninfluenced by party caucus.”

Can Mr. Crisp be depended upon to do this? Most certainly not. Then Mr. Livingston has violated requirements drawn by his own hand. But there yet is another reason why Mr. Livingston and other Alliancemen should not have voted for Mr. Crisp. During the session of the

Supreme Council at Indianapolis the following resolution was passed by that body:

Realizing that the action of the members of the Fifty-second Congress who were elected by the aid of Alliance constituencies will have an important influence upon the welfare of our beloved order, we respectfully and earnestly request all representatives in said Congress so elected to decline to enter into any party caucus called to designate a candidate for speaker, unless adherence to the principles of the Ocala platform are made a test of admission to said caucus.

This resolution was exactly in line with the St. Louis platform and agreement with the Knights of Labor, and also with Mr. Livingston's own resolutions at Ocala, Fla. It was adopted by the Supreme Council at Indianapolis and was therefore the voice of the Alliance. In view of the fact that Mr. Livingston's vote for Mr. Crisp did not “conform fully” to Mr. Livingston's resolution passed at Ocala, Fla., he being a state officer, he is, by his own resolution, “subject to suspension by the national president.”

So far as Mr. Livingston is concerned the case stands thus:

He has violated the agreement made at St. Louis and the platform there adopted. He has violated the requirements of his own resolution adopted at Ocala. He has violated the expressed will of the Supreme Council as declared by resolution at Indianapolis. This is not applicable alone to Mr. Livingston, but to all others who come within the pale of those resolutions. Our citation to Mr. Livingston is intended more as an honor to him than otherwise because in him we recognize the elements of a leader, and he has for years been to the fore in the Alliance movement. Now this is one side of the question. What can be offered in extenuation for this action on the part of some seventeen Alliancemen? We regret to see such a popular and able paper as the *National Economist* offering an apology for their action. It was hardly expected that the *Economist* would criticize the action of these Congressmen, but it was fair to presume that it would make no attempt to palliate their plain and palpable violation of the St. Louis agreement, the Ocala resolutions, and the specially expressed will of the Supreme Council at Indianapolis. The *Economist* sees fit to call the election of Crisp “The Greatest Victory” (see issue Dec. 12th). It then undertakes to show that it is an Alliance victory because it was a defeat of the Democratic bosses, and a victory for that element in the Democratic party that would recognize the currency question as an issue in 1892. What bosses were defeated. Sim-

ply one set of Democratic bosses were turned down by another set of Democratic bosses not a whit better. Were there no bosses on Mr. Crisp's side? Who were his active supporters? Governor Hill, of New York, a rival candidate against Mr. Cleveland for the Democratic nomination for president; Senator Gorman, a protectionist Democrat; Cal. Brice, step-senator for the state of Ohio, who hires convict labor in his Tennessee mines at the exclusion of honest miners; and the procession is backed up by Tammany Hall Democracy, an element than which if you would rake hell with a fine tooth comb, you would find no worse. These were the bosses that were victorious. How can it be claimed as an Alliance victory? It was simply a “Kilkenny cat fight” for spoils—nothing more or nothing less.

It is claimed that the defeat of Mills will force the silver question to the front as the paramount issue of the campaign of 1892. If there are any two men in the United States that are good authority upon this question they are Mr. Crisp himself and Mr. Springer, of Illinois, whose vote gave Crisp the nomination, and who was afterwards made chairman of the committee on ways and means. In his speech immediately after the nomination Mr. Crisp said:

I beg to say to you now, as I speak to you my first words since I am your selection for speaker, that my election means no step backwards in tariff reform. [Prolonged applause and cheering.] I beg to say to you that there is in our party no man who more earnestly believes in the Democratic doctrine of tariff reform than I do.

Not a word did he say about silver. The burden of his little speech was to pacify the other set of bosses.

Mr. Springer said:

So far as the question of tariff reform is concerned, I have taken pains to satisfy myself that in Mr. Crisp's election it will be preserved as the paramount issue of the presidential campaign of 1892.

Mr. Hatch, of Missouri, said:

I have never at any time during this campaign shared in the feeling against Mr. Crisp for the statement made that he was not as able and conscientious tariff reformer as Mr. Mills, or any other gentleman in Congress.

In the face of these emphatic declarations we are surprised to see as able a paper as the *Economist* claiming any vantage ground on account of bringing the currency question to the front. We look upon the whole thing as a trade between Hill and Crisp, the latter to bring to bear his influence among the people of the south to secure Hill's nomination for president in 1892. In the meantime Hill is masquerading as a free silver advocate to win that influence. But to return to

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